



# HUMPBACK WHALE SWIM

## SWIM WITH HUMPBACK WHALES

### FROM START OF AUGUST TO THE

### END OF OCTOBER

Every year between August and October, the magnificent humpback whales swim through the waters of the **Ningaloo Marine Park**. We used to revel in seeing these creatures in the ocean from our camp, but since 2016 you can now experience a swim right alongside them. We can report it as being a truly 'transformative' experience... for all nature lovers, this is **'bucket-list-stuff'** at its very best!

Humpback whales are one of the larger baleen whale species and adults' range in length from 12 to 16 mtrs. The humpback has a distinctive body shape, with long pectoral fins and a knobbly head. It is well known for breaching and other surface behaviours. Males produce a complex song lasting 10 to 20 minutes, which they repeat for hours at a time; parts of this song are audible to human ears in the water.

From June to November, an estimated **30,000 humpback whales** migrate along the **Ningaloo Coast** on their way to and from their breeding and birthing grounds in Exmouth Gulf and sheltered waters north as far as the Kimberley.

We can organise a **Humpback Whale Swim** experience with our local partners. Your day will begin with the 25-minute transfer from Sal Salis to Tantabiddi Boat Ramp. Once onboard you will be kitted out with a wetsuit & snorkel gear; enjoy morning tea as you motor out of protected waters and into the Indian Ocean.

A spotter plane heads up above the reef to locate these **gentle giants**. Once found, it will be time to enter the water to see them swim past. You do not swim after the whales, however you will be past the reef in deeper water, so you must be comfortable in the ocean. They will continually move so swimming is required during the interaction; you will need to be a confident swimmer, able to snorkel and swim freestyle. The whales are found in the open ocean so you may be swimming in current and swell.

In addition to swimming with humpback whales, the spotter plane will be searching for opportunities to interact with whale sharks, manta rays, turtles, dolphins, dugongs and sea birds. Depending on the day you may return to the calm waters of **Ningaloo Reef for lunch and snorkelling**. Return to camp will be in the mid-afternoon.

Humpback whale swims are available from **start of August to the end of October** each year and they do need to be pre-booked as the boats do fill up months in advance. Our reservations team will book your accommodation and assist with booking your humpback whale swim experience.

#### **You will need to bring**

- Towel from Sal Salis (this is provided by the lodge on your arrival day)
- A few additional layers for use on board as it can get cold in between swims
- Hat, sunglasses and other personal items
- GoPro and underwater cameras may be used, however poles are not allowed
- Seasickness tablets if you're prone to feeling sick out on the ocean